

Some Pioneers of Columbia

"Pioneers and the settlement of Columbia"

"Well," said E. W. Stephens, "the first Government land sale was held in 1818, but there was no settlement in this locality until 1820. Then a little place called Smithton grew up where Westmount is now. It was named after General Thomas A. Smith, register of lands, who lived at Franklin."

"There was a tavern at Smithton, a double-hewed log house, which was owned by General Richard Gentry, grandfather of N. T. Gentry. It was called a house of entertainment in those days."

"The first circuit court of Boone County was held under a tree at Smithton. The first judge of the court was Judge David Todd. His brother, Roger N. Todd, who was the first circuit clerk, was N. T. Gentry's other grandfather. Hamilton R. Gamble, who was later governor of Missouri, was first prosecuting attorney. Warren Woodson, grandfather of Dr. Woodson Moss, was the first county clerk. The first county court was composed of Anderson Woods, Lazarus Wilcox and Peter Wright."

"Anderson Woods' son, James H. Woods, lived right here where my office stands now," said Mr. Stephens. "And James' son, William S. Woods, who founded William Woods College at Fulton, was born at this spot. Peter Wright was the great-grandfather of J. Kelly Wright."

"The first sheriff was Overton Harris, grandfather of Judge David H. Harris, present judge of the Circuit Court. Peter Bass was the first foreman of the grand jury."

Smithton's Brief Career.

"Smithton stood only about six months or a year. They could not find water over there, so they moved over to where Columbia now stands. The sale of lots was held here early in 1821. At this sale some one asked, 'What shall we call the town?' Colonel Robert Estill, whose descendants are living now in Howard County, said, 'Call it Columbia.'"

"The town was surveyed by Peter Wright, and William Jewell, who founded William Jewell College at Liberty, helped lay it out. A tract of land where the cemetery now is, was set aside in 1821 as a site for the state university. Congress had just passed a bill providing for a university in every state, and Columbians began to make ready for it right away. But when the University was located here in 1839, it was placed at the present location. The other would have been a better site, in my opinion."

"William Jewell lived in the west part of town, opposite the tract of land which had been set aside for the University. General Gentry had moved

his tavern to the place where Fredendall's store stands now. Jewell wanted the town to grow toward the west, and Gentry was trying to bring it to the east. In 1823 there were 300 people here."

"William Jewell was trustee of the town for a long time and to him we owe the wide streets and the fact that the town was not built around the courthouse square as in most Missouri towns. He superintended the buildings of the courthouse in 1845, where the courthouse columns now stand, and placed this inscription on it: 'O Justice, when expelled from other habitations, make this thy dwelling place.' He is buried in the family cemetery, south of Columbia."

The First Postmistress.

"General Gentry was killed in the Seminole War, in Florida. His widow, Ann Gentry, was appointed postmistress by Andrew Jackson. She was said to be the first postmistress in the United States."

"Old Franklin was the nearest town to Columbia. It was the largest town in this part of the state, but was swept away in the river later. Fulton and

Fayette were started in 1823. Boone County was organized in 1820, and I have the original advertisement of the sale of lots in Columbia in 1821."

"The first brick house built in Columbia is still standing, near the Katy tracks, where it was built. It was owned by Charles Hardin, the first postmaster, and the father of Governor Charles H. Hardin."

"David Gordon was another prominent pioneer. He had a number of sons who were successful in their professions. They were J. B. Gordon, who was a prominent lawyer, James M. Charles and George W. Gordon. They lived around here and had large families."

"A. J. Williams was a state senator and held the governor's position at a time when a governor had not yet been elected to fill a vacancy. Dr. Daniel P. Wilcox was a prominent lawyer. Other early Columbians were: James H. Bennett, Anthony W. Lane, Abraham Foley, Captain David M. Hickman, Dr. Anthony W. Rollins, ancestor of the Rollins family here, and among the very first were Dr. James W. Moss, my wife's grandfather, and Sinclair Kirtley. My father, James L. Stephens, did not start into business here until 1844."

From Four Motor Cars to 1000

Automobiles have multiplied in Columbia since W. B. West purchased the first car ever owned in the city and gave pedestrians "the thrill of a life time." Today none of Boone County's one thousand automobiles, ranging all the way up to Whites, Loziers and Packards, create the slightest stir of emotion. In fact, the automobile has become so common that it is now the faithful old family horse which causes pedestrians to halt, look and listen before venturing across the street.

Columbia boasted of four automobiles in 1908—a Ford, an Olds and two Reos. The figures for 1917 show that in Boone County there were approximately 700, and J. T. McMullen of Taylor's Garage says that at least 300 have been added to the list since that time. The different makes of cars are pretty well represented through agencies in Columbia. Among them are the Ford, Hudson, Maxwell, Saxon, Nash, Dodge, Reo, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Buick, Oakland and Overland.

Motor trucks and delivery cars are replacing the horse in Columbia in transfer work. One dealer has estimated that there are as many as twenty-five trucks in operation on the streets daily, not counting those that come in from the nearby towns for freight. Several of the last mentioned are in operation between

Columbia and the smaller towns of the county such as Ashland, Deer Park, Englewood, Stephens Store and Rocheport. Only a few years ago the matter of getting freight to and from these places was an all day's job for one trip, but now with the trucks even Englewood, which is eighteen miles distant, is easily reached on two trips a day, each time with more than twice the amount carried by a wagon and team.

"The coming of automobiles has indeed been the making of roads," said F. W. Niedermeyer, who has been in the automobile business since 1909.

He says the farmers never think about good roads until they get a car and then it is no trouble at all to get a good crowd out to a road meeting, and all are enthusiastic boosters. Mr. Niedermeyer says that the increase in the number of cars in the county for the last two years has been more than all the other years together. In driving over the county he said he very seldom ran across a farmer who didn't have a car, and those who didn't already have one were building a garage, getting ready for one.

It is the medium-priced car which seems to appeal to the greater part of Boone Countians. The up-keep, especially the tires, is much less on the cheaper car, and this means a great deal to the average car owner.



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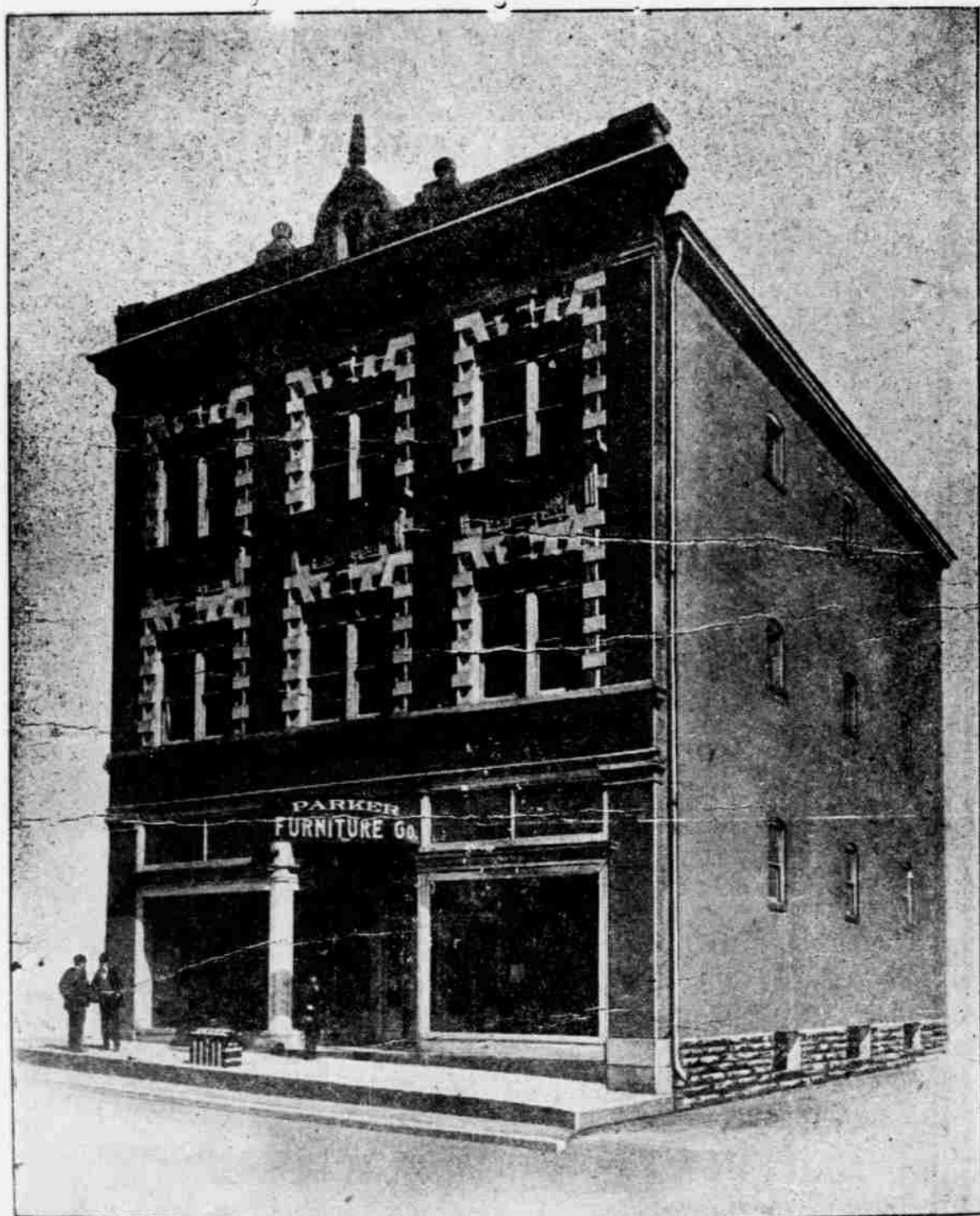
Made-in-Columbia candy by Jimmie is delicious, fresh and reasonable in price. It's the kind that melts in your mouth and makes you wish for more.

Three stores in Columbia are in some way managed by Jimmie. They are The College Inn, the Kolumbia Kandy Kitchen and the Virginia Confectionery. At each place there is a certain degree of enjoyment you get from a drink, from a dish of ice cream or candy that can be found in no other place.

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